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Tuesday, July 18, 2000

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Senate Approves Funding for National Parks and Public Lands

Washington, D.C. – The U.S. Senate today approved funding for the Department of Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2001 by a vote of 97 to 2. Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE) voted in favor of the measure.

“This bill provides funding for the federal government to preserve and maintain our national parks and wildlife areas without diminishing fiscal responsibility and private property rights,” said Hagel. “The measure also ensures that all Americans have access to our public lands to hike, camp, horse-back ride or tour.”

The bill includes funding for the following programs of importance to Nebraska:

- \$2.35 million for construction and interior design of the Missouri Recreational Rivers Research and Education Center at Ponca State Park. Hagel actively sought full funding for this project.
- Approximately \$1.65 million for State and Private Forestry initiatives in Nebraska. This program protects non-federal forest land through voluntary, incentive-based partnerships. Hagel co-signed a letter to the committee in support of this increase in funding.
- \$12,286,000 for construction of Phase II of the Winnebago Tribe’s hospital.

As has been the case for the last three years, the bill also stipulates that none of the allocated funds may be used to implement the Kyoto Protocol, the 1997 climate change treaty which still has not been sent to the Senate for ratification. The House passed H.R. 4578 on June 16 by a vote of 204 to 172.